1: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930) 1933 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

PERVERSION

838 Up to now the more or less normal sexual life has been described and no mention made of any abnormalities or perversions. Practically none of these exist. There is no homosexuality, and they had never heard of such a phenomenon. When I said that such a practice was occasionally found among other peoples, the Lesu people were surprised and rather horrified. Boys and young men are frequently [512] seen walking arm in arm, or with an arm thrown affectionately over a friend's shoulder, but this indicates friendship only. It must be remembered that here there is no restriction on a man showing affection, and that a father fondles a baby as much as the mother does.

839 All informants very emphatically assert that there is no intercourse between human beings and animals—pigs, dogs, birds, phalangers, or any other animal. Yet they take as a matter of course the folk-tales and myths in which frequent mention is made of marriages and sexual intercourse with birds and other animals. (A pig is never featured in this connection, however.) No attempt is made to justify the happenings in the tales or to correlate them with present-day life. Whether the type of intercourse mentioned so frequently in the tales ever took place or not is a matter of conjecture for the ethnologist. Natives insist it does not take place to-day, and that it never has. Women sometimes [231] suckle young pigs just after they are born if the mother pig happens to be away in the bush. This is not considered unusual or in any way abnormal. Karot, of Lesu, nursed a pig while I was there.

Masturbation, not generally considered a perversion in our own society, is practised frequently at Lesu, and regarded as normal behaviour. A woman will masturbate if she is sexually excited and there is no man to satisfy her. A couple may be having intercourse in the same house, or